



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 5, 2011

Bill Clinton Likes GOP Hopefuls Jon Huntsman and Mitt Romney

As the list of GOP contenders for the White House continues to burgeon, voters are sizing up the field and picking favorites ? including Democrat Bill Clinton. At the Aspen Ideas Festival on Saturday evening, the former President told reporters that he liked Republican presidential hopefuls Jon Huntsman and Mitt Romney. Unsurprisingly, the reasons that Clinton likes the two men are the very same ones that concern potential GOP voters. Clinton commented:



But, yknow, I like the governors: I like Huntsman and Romney. Romneys a MUCH better candidate than he was last time, because hes not apologizing for signing the health-care bill. Hes got another creative way of saying we oughta repeal Obamacare, but thats probly the price of gettin the nomination.

Huntsman hasnt said what hes for yet, but I just kinda like him [laughter]. He LOOKS authentic he looks like a real guy [laughter]. I mean, a real human being. I like his family, I like his kind of iconoclastic way. And he was a pretty good governor. And he wasnt a right-wing ideologue. [Emphasis in original.]

As for Michele Bachmann, Clinton asserted:

Bachmanns been a better candidate than I THOUGHT shed be, and I dont agree with her on nearly anything. But shes got a very compelling personal story, and she[’s] gotta lot of juice, and she turns [on] a lot of those [sic] anti-government crowd. [Emphasis in original.]

Clinton made similar statements regarding the presidential candidates during an exclusive [ABC News interview](#):

The ones I liked are the ones that you think are more moderate. ’cause I think they’re a little more connected to the real world. And I think they’ll be they’d be formidable. ... But I’m afraid if I say anything nice about them, they’ll lose, for sure.

During that interview, Clinton opined that Jon Huntsman did a very nice, a good job for America as ambassador to China. I think hes quite an impressive man. Hes got an impressive family. I had the honor of meeting one of his children once and having a conversation with her. I think that hes refreshingly, kind of, unhide-bound. Just comes across as non-ideological conservative, but non-ideological, practical.

Clinton also observed in the ABC interview that Romney is doing a better job as a candidate this time



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than he did four years ago. He comes across as more relaxed and more convicted about what he did do, less willing to just be forced into apologizing for it [his Massachusetts health care bill] because it violates some part of his party orthodoxy.

Clinton took the opportunity to address Michele Bachmanns early success. Ive been watching her speak at some of these conventions on ESPN, you know. [S]he comes across as a real person. The story that they tell is pretty compelling all those foster children shes taken in, and children shes raised and the work shes done.

The Democrat also had pleasant things to say regarding former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour, and Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels.

Whether the candidates stand a chance against President Obama, however, is another story for Clinton:

Its not like he [Obama] doesnt have a story to tell. I also think hes done a good job in trying to harmonize Americas differences, trying to widen the circle of opportunity. I think hes got a good record on gay rights. I think hes got a good record on trying to promote diversity in a positive way.

The Blaze notes the irony of Clintons reference to Obamas record on gay rights: Interesting comments. Is 'a good record on gay rights' pushing the removal of the 'Dont Ask, Dont Tell,' policy which you installed?

More importantly, however, some analysts wonder how the prospects of these candidates would be influenced by a Bill Clinton endorsement. *The Blaze* observes:

With some [commentators already questioning](#) if Jon Huntsman is too moderate to be elected by todays GOP, will Clintons kind words be hurled against the former Utah governor by his fellow 2012 hopefuls? Will conservatives who already have an issue with Mitt Romneys [health care thing](#) become further frustrated by Clintons approval?

Photo: Former President Bill Clinton speaks during the closing session of The Clinton Global Initiative America meeting Thursday, June 30, 2011, in Chicago.: AP Images



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